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ABSTRACT

A critical shortage of bilingual teachers exists in Texas. While the Hispanic population has grown at a 39% rate, the number of Hispanic teachers has declined. The Teachers Need Teachers program in San Antonio pairs about 75 new bilingual education teachers with experienced bilingual education teachers, who serve as mentors. Its purpose is to enhance retention of teachers in a critical shortage area, where negative job-related factors such as professional isolation, conflicting philosophies, heavy workload, and lack of access to needed materials cause many teachers to leave their jobs. Special needs identified include direct teacher assistance in implementing bilingual education strategies and practices, assistance in teaching English as a Second Language, assistance in teaching nontraditional students, reduction of job-related stresses, and access to bilingual materials. The program's design is intended to provide support through specific phases of a new teacher's experience, enhancing self-confidence and persistence. Mentor teachers are selected for their experience, competence, and supportive characteristics and are matched by grade level with entry-level teachers. Activities include six training workshops and varied support services (bulletins, instructional materials, mentoring and coaching activities, observations and demonstrations, resource-lending and information-sharing, planning and feedback sessions). Mentor teacher logs have revealed distinct patterns of assistance to new teachers at different times in the semester, and new teacher feedback and behavior have validated the need for and benefits of the support activities. (MSE)

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Teachers Need Teachers: An Induction Program for First Year Bilingual Teachers

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Abstract

The number of teachers certified to teach in bilingual education classrooms has not kept pace with the critical need to provide a supportive bilingual learning environment for an increasing minority student population. Many negative factors contribute to the low number of teachers entering into and remaining in the field of bilingual education, including teachers' perception of limited or lacking assistance in implementing bilingual programs and lack of concern for new teachers' anxiety and stress associated with the implementation of bilingual education programs. In attempting to meet beginning bilingual education teachers' needs, IDRA has developed a program for first-year teachers that provides a solid base of much needed support. Known as Project TNT (Teachers Need Teachers), the IDRA program provides an induction process for new bilingual education teachers in which new teachers are paired with experienced bilingual education teachers, who serve as mentors. This article examines : (1) the need for retaining bilingual education teachers (a critical shortage area); (2) areas addressed through induction programs; (3) IDRA's induction program for bilingual education teachers (Project TNT); and (4) recommendations for practice.

How Do We Keep Bilingual Teachers In Our Classrooms?
The TNT Response

A critical shortage of bilingual teachers exists in Texas. Beginning teachers certified in bilingual education and English as a second language are sought by hundreds of school districts in the state. While the Hispanic population has grown at a 39% rate (five times the national average), the number of Hispanic teachers has declined. To achieve a teaching force which reflects the ethnic representation in classrooms, at least 500,000 of the estimated 1.5 million new teachers will need to come from different racial and ethnic backgrounds (Castro & Ingle, 1991). The total available teacher pool in Texas, however, does not appear to be increasing in proportion to the expected demand.

The Need

In a study of the relative demand by teaching area in the continental United States, the field of bilingual education received the highest mean rating (4.35) on a scale from 1.00 to 5.00, with 5.00 considered of extremely high priority (Johnson & Montemayor, Eds., 1991). At a time when the majority of the student population in Texas and four other states is increasingly composed of minority students, it is disturbing to note the downward trend in the number of Hispanic and bilingual education teachers. Thus, the pool of bilingual education teachers has been categorized as a critical shortage area, and the identification and retention of bilingual education teachers of utmost importance.

Several factors affect the total number of bilingually certified teachers produced. The total number of minority students entering the teaching profession is small. American universities confer only 100,000 bachelors degrees to minority students in all disciplines. Of these, fewer than 10% are in education (Cole, 1986). In 1980, minority teachers made up 12.5% of the national teaching force (Cole, 1986), while only 8% of newly hired teachers were minorities (AACTE, 1987). When the number of minority teachers is disagreggated, Hispanic teachers represent less than 5% of the national teaching force. Teachers certified to teach in bilingual education classrooms comprise less than 1%.

During the past decade, these small numbers decreased dramatically. Smith (1987) has documented the elimination of 94,873 minority teachers, including 34,562 Hispanics, from teacher education in 35 states through competency testing.

It is becoming more difficult for school districts to retain qualified professionals in teaching positions. According to Heyns (1988), 30% of beginning teachers leave the profession during their first two years, and 50% of beginning teachers in urban school districts leave within five years. Summers' (1987) findings indicate that 26.5% of beginning teachers drop out of teaching within two years and 62% do so within five years. The poor retention rate is especially distressing because research indicates the most academically talented leave in the greatest numbers (Schelechty & Vance, 1981).

Why do new teachers abandon the profession for which they have spent four or five years of preparation time? Most leave because the negative factors related to their jobs far outnumber the positive factors they experience in the teaching profession. The situations in which they are placed do not allow them as much success as they had anticipated. They don't feel valued by the system. Often, there is no support system to help them through their first week, month, or year of teaching.

A particularly high attrition rate exists among certified bilingual education teachers. They are often a numerical minority group on a campus since often only one classroom per grade level is designated bilingual (Sosa, 1988). Moreover, they experience feelings of isolation among fellow grade level teachers in part because they use English and another language as a vehicle for instruction. It is not uncommon for the school principal and the bilingual teachers to have conflicting philosophies about how to best serve the limited-English-proficient (LEP) students. Factors contributing to bilingual teachers transferring out of bilingual education classrooms or leaving the profession entirely include: a greater than average preparation and work load due to dual language instruction; a feeling of isolation in their teaching area and grade level; and limited accessibility to commercially prepared instructional material (see Johnson & Montemayor, 1991).

Clearly, beginning teachers in bilingual education classrooms who teach limited-English-proficient students have special needs. These include direct teacher assistance in implementing bilingual education strategies and practices, assistance in teaching English as a second language as well as assistance in teaching non-traditional students (obtaining materials, receiving feedback on lesson plans, and observing lessons), assistance to reduce the anxiety and stress associated with the implementation of bilingual education, especially in schools where the program is experiencing resistance from other teachers, and finally, to provide teachers access to bilingual materials.

The Response

Gray and Gray (1985) report that unless required to request assistance, 92% of new teachers do not seek help. To assist new teachers, a trial period known as the induction year has been established in which teachers are socialized into the norms/practices of the profession. In April 1991, the Texas State Board of Education established rule 149.22 "Induction Program for Beginning Teachers." which called for all beginning teachers without prior teaching experience to be assigned a mentor teacher. The rule also called for a one year participation in special inservice.

Odell (1989) identifies seven goals of teacher assistance programs. They are:

1. To provide continuing assistance to reduce the identified common problems for beginning teachers;
2. To support development of the knowledge and the skills needed by beginners to be successful in their initial teaching position;
3. To integrate beginning teachers into the social system of the school, the school district, and the community;
4. To provide an opportunity for beginning teachers to analyze and reflect on their teaching with coaching from veteran support teachers;
5. To initiate and build a foundation with new teachers for the continued study of teaching;
6. To increase the positive attitudes of beginning teachers about teaching; and
7. To increase the retention of good beginning teachers in the profession.

Beginning teachers in bilingual education classrooms who teach limited-English-proficient students have additional needs which include:

1. To obtain assistance in implementing bilingual education strategies and practices;
2. To obtain assistance in teaching English as a second language and teaching the non-traditional student (obtaining materials, receiving feedback on lesson plans, and observing lessons);
3. To obtain assistance to reduce the anxiety and stress associated with the implementation of bilingual education especially in schools where the program is experiencing resistance from other teachers; and
4. To have access to bilingual/multicultural materials.

Phases of First-Year Teaching

Moir (1990) and her colleagues have identified six phases that new teachers experience during their first year of teaching. These states are: anticipation, survival, disillusionment, rejuvenation, reflection, and anticipation once again. All beginning teachers experience these phases, albeit not at the same pace. Figure 1 provides a timeline of the six stages.

Anticipation Phase

Before completing their pre-service college requirements, student teachers become excited and anxious about their first teaching positions. During the anticipation phase, they tend to romanticize the role of the teacher. New teachers accept their first teaching assignments with a tremendous commitment to making a difference and a somewhat idealistic view of how to accomplish their goals.

Survival Phase

The first month of school is very overwhelming. New teachers are learning a lot at a very rapid pace. They are bombarded with a variety of unanticipated problems and situations. During the survival phase, most new teachers are struggling to keep their heads above water. They become very focused and consumed with the day-to-day routines. There is little time to stop and reflect. They arrive at school early, stay late, and often devote their weekends to school work. Although tired by the amount of work, first-year teachers usually maintain a tremendous amount of energy and commitment during the survival phase.

Disillusionment Phase

In addition to non-stop work, new teachers encounter several new events during the first six to eight weeks of school. They are faced with back-to-school night, parent-teacher conferences, completing report cards for the first time, and their first formal evaluation by the site administrator. These milestones place an already vulnerable teacher in a very stressful and precarious situation. Teaching responsibilities often strain relationships with family and friends, may cause self-doubt, may lower self-esteem, and may cause new teachers to question their professional commitment.

Rejuvination Phase

The new teacher's attitude toward teaching begins to rise after the winter vacation; it is this

changed attitude that marks the fourth phase, the rejuvenation phase. The vacation provides a break in the beginning teacher's routine and serves as a source for renewed hope--they often find they are ready and able to put past problems behind them. A better understanding of the system, an acceptance of the realities of teaching, and a sense of accomplishment can help new teachers feel rejuvenated. Beginning teachers learn new coping skills and strategies that help them prevent, reduce, and manage many of the problems they are likely to encounter in the second half of the school year. The rejuvenation phase tends to last into spring, and teachers face many ups and downs along the way. Toward the end of the phase, new teachers begin to raise concerns about whether they can get everything accomplished prior to the end of the school year.

Reflection Phase

The reflection phase occurs in May when the end of the school year is near. Beginning teachers now have a wealth of personal experiences from which to draw. They think about changes they plan to make the following school year in the areas of management, curriculum, and teaching strategies. A vision slowly begins to emerge as to what the next school year will bring and how they will handle its challenges.

Anticipation Phase

The final phase, one of renewed anticipation, is a direct result of the teachers' formalization of viable plans for the following school years. In this final phase, they have come full circle in the attitudinal phases of first-year teaching.

To varying degrees, all new teachers must contend with the attitudinal phases of first-year teaching. However, an important trend has been detected. Beginning teachers who have experienced a support system during their initial year of teaching are more likely to anticipate their second year with increased confidence and self assurance about their teaching abilities. Indeed, Ward and Dianda (1990) have identified five major results from the California New Teacher Project:

1. New teacher retention rates are higher when new teachers receive support;
2. New teachers spend more time planning instruction when they receive support;
3. The intensity of support provided is positively related to new teacher's instructional practices;
4. Intensity of support is also related to student engagement rates; and

5. New teachers feel that support contributes to their success.

The TNT Induction Program

In attempting to meet beginning teachers' needs, the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) has developed an induction program for first-year teachers who are certified in bilingual education and teach limited-English-proficient students: Project TNT (Teachers Need Teachers). Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Title VII, Office of Bilingual Education, and Language Minority Affairs (OBEMLA), TNT provides a teacher induction process for first-year bilingual education classroom teachers in the San Antonio metropolitan area. Each year of the project, twenty-five new bilingual education teachers from five school districts are assigned an experienced bilingual education teacher who serves as mentor during their first year of teaching. At the end of the project, approximately 75 new bilingual teachers will have experienced an induction process with 75 mentor teachers. The project is a cooperative effort between IDRA and the bilingual education administrators in the five school districts: Edgewood ISD, Harlandale ISD, San Antonio ISD, South San Antonio ISD, and Southwest ISD. Fourteen campuses are involved in the project. It began in July 1991 and will continue through June 1994.

IDRA is the grantee of the short-term training project and provides the induction process for first-year bilingual education teachers in the participating schools. Participants are paid a monthly stipend for their activities. The five school districts are reimbursed for the teachers' release time. Some new instructional materials are purchased each year of the project. Monies are available for consultants, evaluation of the data collected, and the administration of the project. This project allows the five school districts to comply with Texas Education Code Rule 149.22 Induction Program for Beginning Teachers for this high priority population at no expense to the district.

Selection Process

1. Beginning Teachers - Teachers with less than one complete year of teaching experience are recommended by the campus administrator to participate in the project. The only group of new teachers not encouraged to participate in Project TNT are those teachers in alternative certification programs. IDRA experience shows that alternative certification programs require a schedule and workload that precludes participation in additional school-related projects.

2. Mentor Teachers - Campus administrators are asked to assign a mentor teacher to each beginning teacher. According to Sosa (1988) a mentor teacher must:

- Be considered a competent teacher as judged by the Texas Teacher Appraisal System:
- Have three or more years teaching experience;
- Demonstrate appropriate teacher/pupil interaction with language minority students;
- Maintain a positive and attractive learning environment;
- Have formulated a teaching philosophy concerning bilingual education;
- Demonstrate good listening skills;
- Focus on establishing positive and caring working relationships;
- Exhibit patience and use empathetic skills during stressful episodes; and
- Possess the appropriate vocabulary to describe teaching practices in a bilingual classroom.

Ideally, the mentor teacher should be teaching at or near his or her assigned beginning teachers' grade level so that schedules can more easily be made to correspond. This allows for more contact between team members during planning and conference periods, lunch times, and other breaks in the school day. It also allows the teachers to combine their classes for special events and presentations, (e.g., films, cultural activities, library activities, parent programs, and so forth). Moreover, most campuses cluster classrooms by grade level. Teaming teachers at opposite ends of the campus can interfere and even prohibit the development of the mentor/ mentee relationship.

Same grade level assignments appear to be most important at the lower grades (Pre-K to 2) due to the number of beginning and itermediate LEP students and the amount of primary language instruction required to teach concepts and reading skills. However, mentor teachers who have taught at multiple grade levels are effective mentors to beginning teachers at other grade levels.

Project Components

The major components of the project consist of training and support activities:

Training activities include six workshops in which participants are provided information about various topics. They share their concerns and plan their mentoring activities for each month. Specific topics for the workshops were finalized after IDRA staff conducted a teacher needs assessment. Topics included:

- State Plan for Educating Limited English Proficient Students
- Philosophy of Coaching and Mentoring

- First and Second Language Acquisition
- Language Development Activities in Spanish
- Language Development Activities in English
- Learning Styles in Culturally Different Students
- Reading Instruction/Literature in Spanish
- Whole Language Strategies
- English as a Second Language Strategies in the Content Areas
- Culture in the Classroom

Support activities are important to help maintain training benefits. Support is provided through:

1. Bulletins - The project director, the participants, principals, and central office personnel in the five districts communicate through a monthly bulletin called *El Enganche/The Link*. The bulletin announces up-coming events and includes classroom tips and successful teaching practices from the participants themselves.

2. Instructional Materials - IDRA has a lending library of approximately 5,000 bilingual/ multicultural instructional materials available to participating teachers on a check-out basis. Access to instructional materials in Spanish is a benefit to both beginning and mentor teachers.

3. Mentoring activities - Mentor teachers are encouraged to meet with their beginning teacher at least twice weekly. Each meeting is recorded in a mentoring log. The log contains information relative to the topic for the intervention, how the concern was diminished plus future plans and follow up activities that result from the intervention. Figure 2 contains a summary of topics reported on the mentoring logs during the first year of the project. The results of the mentoring logs are explained in the Findings.

4. Coaching activities - Project TNT provides a collegial coaching assistance system where the support teacher works closely with the beginning teacher through a number of formal and informal interactions.

5. Observations and Demonstrations - Beginning teachers are required to observe their mentors promptly after the project begins. They are encouraged to observe other teachers assigned to bilingual education classrooms as well. Observations may range from twenty to forty-five minutes. The observer uses the Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS) observation form in order to familiarize the beginning teacher with the process.

Prior to the scheduled observations by the administration, the mentor teacher observes the beginning teacher twice. After each observation, the mentor provides suggestions on how to

improve or enhance instruction, discipline, classroom climate and management, and other teaching skills. Mentor teachers may plan a demonstration with the beginning teacher's students the following day, or teams may combine their classes for a period so the mentor teachers may demonstrate for the beginning teachers.

6. Lending Resources and Sharing Information - Beginning teachers have few instructional materials and most schools provide little more than colored paper for the bulletin boards. Mentor teachers, on the other hand, have collected and garnered material from various sources during their professional careers. They know where materials are "stashed" on campus and they know from whom they might obtain them. Mentor teachers often lend beginning teachers visuals, concrete models and equipment to enhance their lessons. In numerous instances, mentor teachers have taken their novices on garage sale shopping trips in order to equip learning centers and to obtain books, games, and manipulatives.

Mentor teachers serve as the "information center" for beginning teachers. Questions from, "How do I get my pencil sharpener replaced?" to, "How do I get the concept of place value over to my students?" can be answered by the mentor teacher. Mentor teachers are selected because they are caring/sharing people. They care about students, and they share with their novices.

7. Planning and Feedback Sessions - The team has several occasions to plan. They plan at the six workshops and they plan during the mentoring sessions. They also plan spontaneously during their lunch breaks or as they take their students down the hall. Evaluation of the planned activities and feedback are more difficult to achieve. The team must deliberately set aside time to reflect on the planned process. This is usually done before or after school hours. The beginning teacher is asked, "How do you think it went?" From past experiences, the mentor teacher is able to provide constructive feedback and guidance.

Findings

This section describes the two major findings of Project TNT:

1. Analysis of mentor teacher logs revealed distinct patterns of assistance with varying emphasis at different times during the semester; and
2. Teacher feedback and behavior validate the need for support activities and the benefit derived from them.

First, in examining the mentoring logs, IDRA found that topics of concern vary by semester. Mentor teacher interventions with the beginning teachers indicated that the patterns of concern varied during the school calendar. Activities seemed to cluster around the scheduled time of

certain major activities. For example, prior to teachers' initial formal assessment by the school administrator, mentor teachers responded to teachers' concerns with lesson preparation and delivery. Other mentoring activities became salient in May when teachers became concerned with grading and promotion issues and requested the mentor's assistance in this area.

Figure 2 provides a summary of mentoring activities during 1991-92, the first year of the project. A total of 738 mentoring logs were submitted during the first year of the project. During October, November and December, 283 interventions were recorded. Between January and May, 455 interventions were recorded.

The largest percentage of mentoring occurred in the area of instructional assistance and planning (28% fall, 34% spring). The increase in the spring semester is probably due to the rapport established in the fall semester.

Classroom management activities declined (36% fall, 20% spring). Beginning teachers received more assistance with classroom management parameters early in the first semester. Most needed only to refine their management style during the second semester.

Questions about campus and district policies and procedures remained an issue both semesters (13%). The need for assistance with instructional materials also remained the same both semesters (12%).

Assistance with the Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS) observations or evaluation accounted for 12% of the interventions in the fall semester. However, this topic dropped to only 8% of the interventions in the spring semester. The fear associated with the TTAS appeared to decline if the teacher had a successful evaluation in the fall.

Discipline management decisions also declined after one semester (8% fall, 4% spring). The logs documented a 50% decline in the discipline problems reported by beginning teachers after one semester.

Assessing, testing or grading issues increased from one semester to the next, (5% fall, 8% spring). Many beginning teachers were not sure of how to assess a student's abilities or how to test for grading purposes.

Issues related to parents also increased between the two time periods, (3% fall, 6% spring). These issues included parent conferences, parents' roles in the classroom, reporting of abusive parents, and PTA activities.

New teacher anxiety remained the same both semesters (3%), as did professional advice and assistance (2%).

In the spring semester, two additional intervention topics arose:

1. How to utilize or work with instructional aides (2%); and
2. Concerns about the Texas Education Agency compliance visits and audits (2%).

Teachers participating in the induction program confirmed the need to provide support services such as those included through the TNT program. Their behavior clearly validated their desire to be fully functional and effective bilingual education teachers. Through their consistent use of IDRA's instructional materials and bulletins, teachers demonstrated that these types of materials and assistance were not available to them outside of the TNT program.

Each teacher provided IDRA with feedback validating the need for and benefits of the program support provided. All 50 participating teachers contributed at least six ideas proven successful in their classroom (one for each issue of the bulletin). Teachers in the TNT program reported having read about and implemented ideas recommended by their peers with good results.

Over 90% of the participating teachers attended the two open house events held at the IDRA Resource Lending Library. During the course of the program nearly 800 pieces of instructional materials were checked out including records, children's books with cassettes, story puppets, puzzles, bulletin board aides, and "how- to" books (on masks, celebrations, art projects). The mentor teachers, who had more experience and resources, made equal use of these resources as the first-year teachers. On several occasions teachers commented on the need for each school district to have a similar resource lending library.

No beginning teacher declined the opportunity to observe their mentor teacher. All 25 scheduled an observation within the first month in the program. Their comments revealed this as one of the best learning experiences of the TNT program because they could see in action new aspects of classroom organization and delivery of instruction. Having the experience of observing others and being observed using the TTAS form further helped the first-year teachers demystify the unknown subsets of lesson observation.

Suggestions for Induction Programs

Beginning bilingual education teachers need experienced bilingual teachers to help them through the induction process. An induction program requires resources. Districts who invest in an induction program make it easier for beginning teachers and increase the chances of retaining teachers in this critical shortage area in the teaching profession.

In addition to providing a comprehensive induction program for beginning teachers at the campus level, districts must do the following in order to retain beginning bilingual education

teachers:

1. Provide compensation and perks to the participants. Mentor teachers must be compensated for mentoring, coaching and participating in an induction program. Release time for observations, coaching and planning is extremely important for the mentor teacher as well as for the beginning teacher.

2. Waive appraisals and evaluations during the first year. Beginning teachers enter their first job already anxious. It is unfair to expect the first-year teacher to perform comparably to the veteran teacher within the first semester. Appraisals and evaluation procedures only raise the anxiety level of the new teacher. All appraisals and evaluations for first-year teachers should be waived.

3. Provide instructional resources for the beginning teacher. Beginning teachers have few if any instructional materials when they are assigned a classroom. Some schools provide a "CARE" package of materials for new teachers which consists primarily of decoration items insufficient for instructional purposes. New teachers need funds for materials and access to instructional resource libraries within the district.

4. Provide release time for observing peer teachers. Beginning teachers learn by observing veteran teachers. A process of scheduling observations and providing release time from the classroom should be an integral part of an induction year. Peer observations should not be limited to year-one of teaching. As beginning teachers enter their second and third years, they will be ready to address other teaching/grouping issues.

Retaining effective teachers is not an easy task . Good teachers don't just happen. Teachers who enjoy teaching and who are nurtured by the system to provide the best instruction possible become those memorable individuals that make a difference in students' lives. Helping the beginning teacher through the first year of teaching is the crucial first step to retaining effective teachers in our schools.

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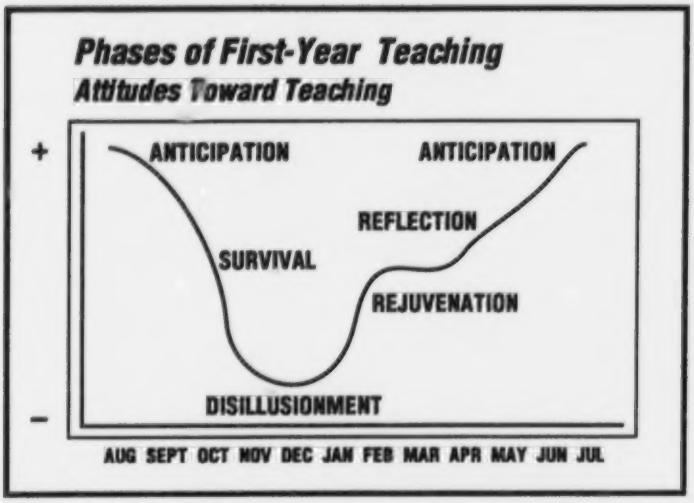

Figure 1: Phases of First Year Teaching: Attitudes Toward Teaching Over the School Year.

Mentoring Log Interventions

Topic of Intervention	Fall '91 Number	Fall '91 Percent	Spr. '92 Number	Spr. '92 Percent
1. Instructional assistance and planning	78	28	156	34
2. Classroom management decisions	36	13	20	4
3. Campus or district procedures	35	13	57	13
4. Instructional materials	33	12	52	12
5. Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS) observations or evaluations	33	12	37	8
6. Discipline management decisions	25	8	20	4
7. Assessing, testing, or grading issues	16	5	37	8
8. Parent conferences or parent involvement	9	3	27	6
9. New teacher anxiety	8	3	13	3
10. Professional advice or assistance	5	2	10	2
11. Instructional aides			8	2
12. TEA audit/compliance			9	2
13. Miscellaneous issues	3	1	9	2
Total	283	100	455	100

Figure 2: Mentoring Log Interventions for Fall 1991 and Spring 1992.